LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

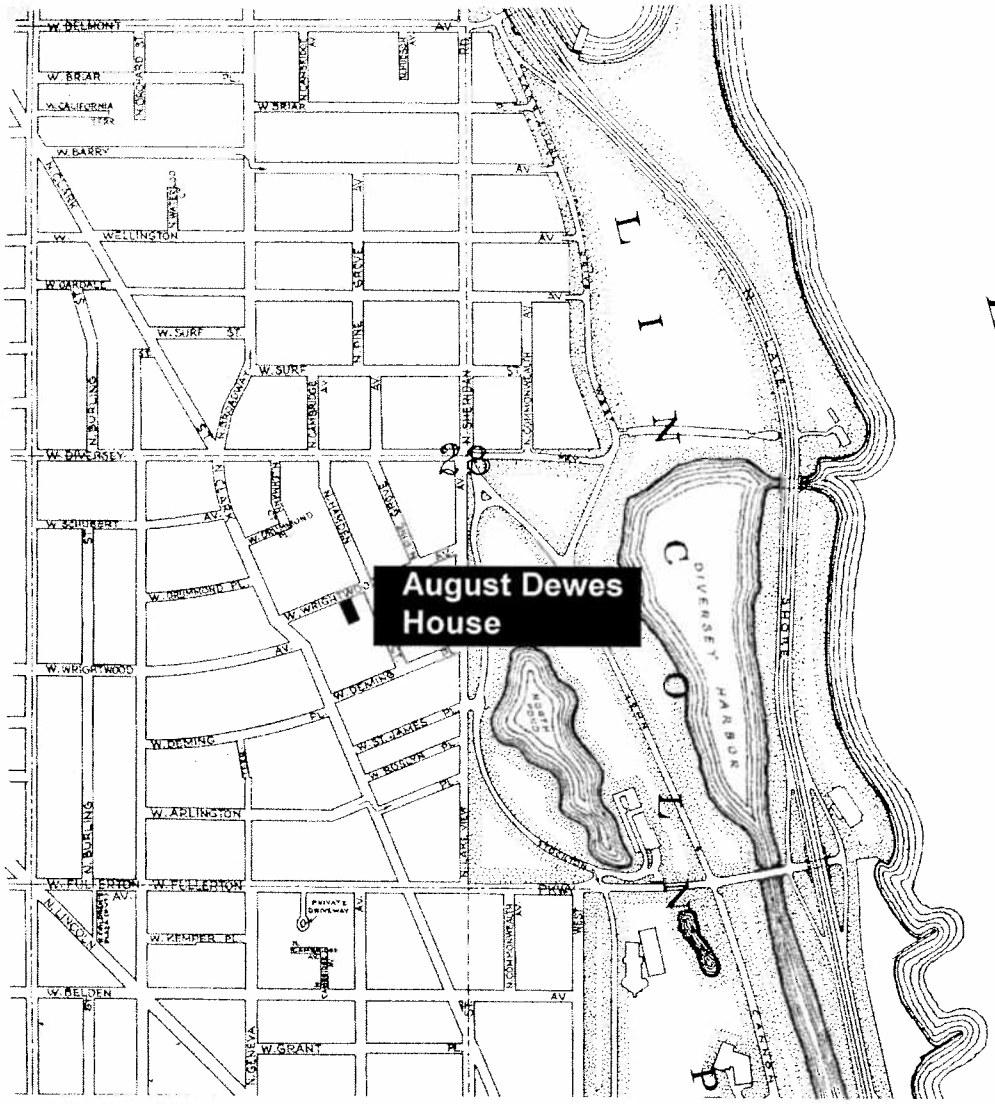
August Dewes House

509 West Wrightwood Avenue

Preliminary Landmark recommendation approved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, August 4, 2004

CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
Denise M. Casalino, P.E., Commissioner



Cover: Views of the August Dewes House.

Above: The August Dewes House is located in the northeastern portion of the Lincoln Park community area.

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.

The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the landmarks commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within the designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.

AUGUST DEWES HOUSE

509 WEST WRIGHTWOOD AVE.

BUILT: **1894-96**
Architect: **CUDELL AND HERCZ**

The August Dewes House is a handsomely designed and crafted Second Empire-style mansion. Located a block west of Lincoln Park on Wrightwood Avenue, the house exemplifies the high-quality housing built in the Lincoln Park neighborhood during the late nineteenth century when the community saw the construction of numerous fine mansions for businessmen, many of whom were German-American.

August Dewes, a German-born businessman who was president of the Standard Brewery in Chicago, built the house as one of a pair of similar houses. (The other house, built for his older brother Francis Dewes, was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1974). The houses were conceived as a unified design with the larger and more elaborate house for Francis set across a large side yard from the smaller, yet similarly designed and crafted, residence for August. The August Dewes House utilizes finely carved stone details and an elaborate mansard-type roof similar to the Francis Dewes House in a style, rare for Chicago, based on both French and German Baroque precedents.

The August Dewes House, along with the Francis Dewes House, is among the finest remaining buildings designed by Adolph Cudell and Arthur Hercz, significant late-nineteenth-century Chicago architects who designed (either together or with other partners) several important projects, including the Cyrus McCormick House on N. Rush St. and Aldine Square in Chicago's South-Side Douglas neighborhood (both demolished).

The Lincoln Park Community and the Dewes Family

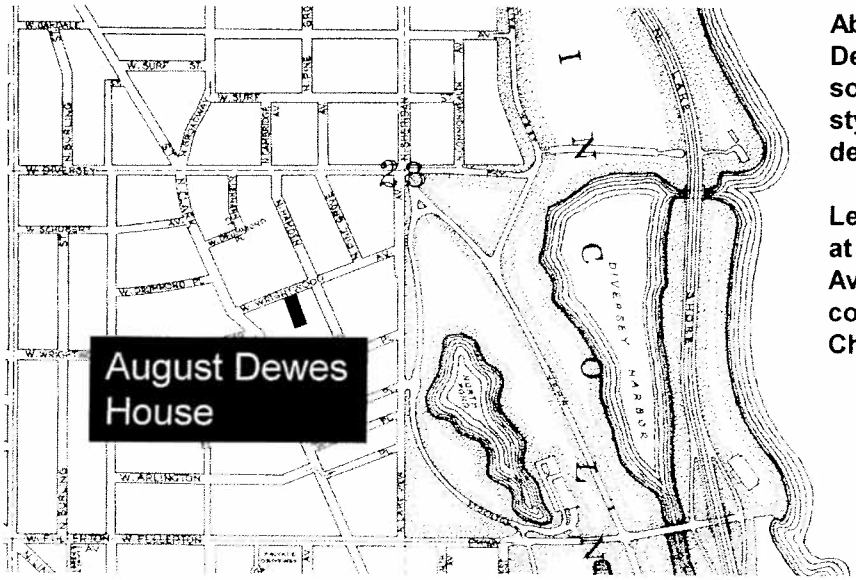
The August Dewes House is located in the Lincoln Park neighborhood, located on Chicago's north lakefront between North Avenue and Diversey Parkway. The neighborhood developed from farming land during the second half of the nineteenth century, encouraged by the extension of street car lines from downtown Chicago along Clark Street and Lincoln Avenue, the creation and enhancement of the lakefront Lincoln Park on the neighborhood's eastern edge, and the establishment of important area institutions such as the McCormick Theological Seminary (founded in 1863) and the 1898 chartering of St.Vincent's College (now DePaul University).

The portion of the Lincoln Park community immediately surrounding the August Dewes House, between Fullerton and Diversey, was annexed to Chicago in 1889. Existing development included "Wright's Grove," a popular German-American picnic grove and beer garden located along Clark Street (formerly Green Bay Road) between Wrightwood Avenue and Diversey Parkway, which was a favorite spot for German *Saengerfests*, a popular music festival of the era. During the 1890s this portion of the Lincoln Park neighborhood developed as a community of finely designed single-family houses, row houses, and small apartment buildings largely inhabited by well-to-do German-American families.

The improvement of the northern end of Lincoln Park itself, Chicago's premiere North-Side park, encouraged such development. Lake View Avenue, facing the park, was built up with handsome large-scale mansions such as a Romanesque Revival-style house on the northwest corner of Fullerton and Lake View avenues (demolished for the Mies van der Rohe-designed 2400 N. Lake View Apartments), the house for retailer Ernest Lehmann located at the southwest corner of Diversey and Lake View (now the site of the Elks National Memorial building), and the Theurer-Wrigley House at Lake View and Arlington (built in 1897 and designated a Chicago Landmark). Streets west of the park typically filled with smaller houses and flat buildings built on narrower lots; the houses of the Arlington-Roslyn Chicago Landmark District are a handsome surviving grouping of such buildings.

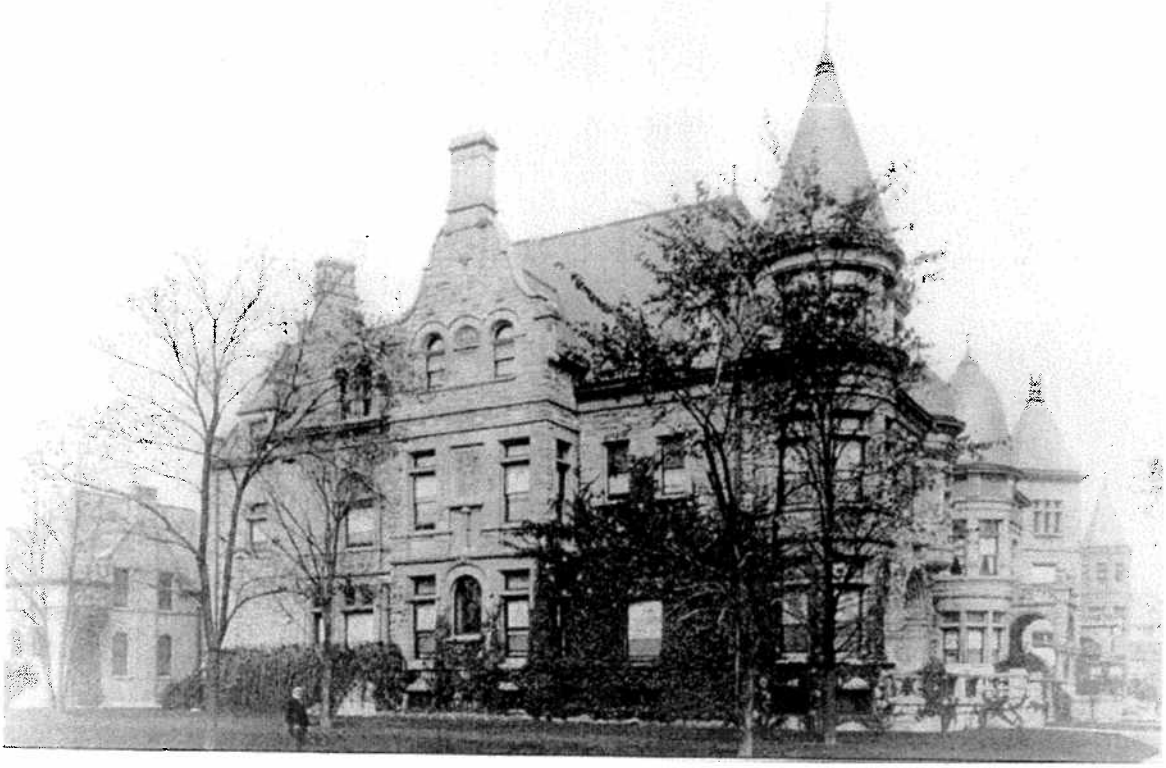
Until the early 1890s, the site of the August and Francis Dewes houses was part of a suburban estate owned by physician Henry M. Hobart. Located at the intersection of Wrightwood Avenue and Hampden Court, the Hobart property was sold in 1894 and subdivided for homes, including the two Dewes houses, which were built between 1894 and 1896. Architects Cudell and Hercz designed the houses for two brothers in a prominent German-American brewing family.

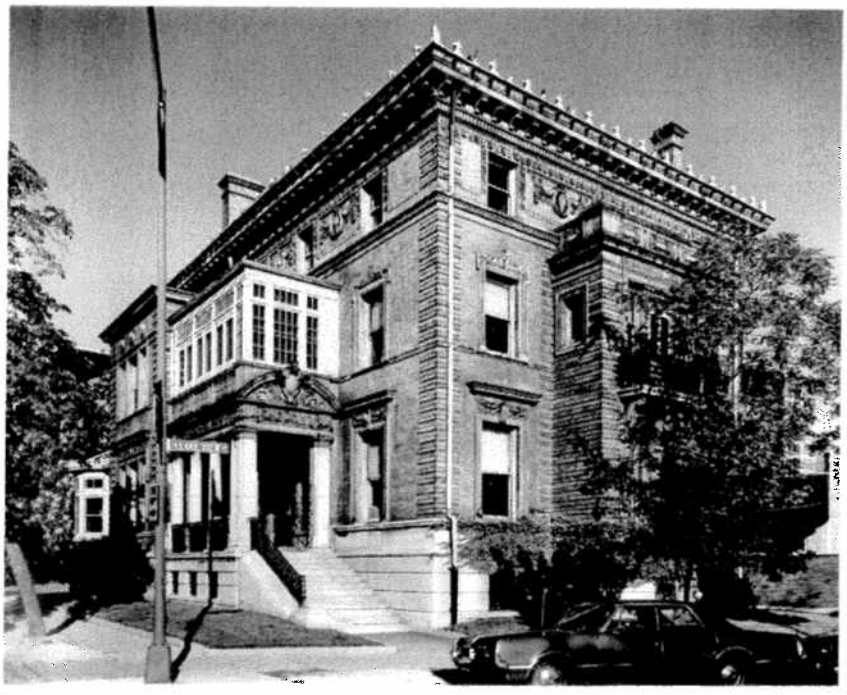
Both **Francis (1845 - 1921)** and **August Dewes (1861 - 1937)** were born in Losheim, Germany. Their father, a brewer by trade, was a member of the first parliament of the newly unified Germany. Of the two brothers, Francis immigrated first to the United States in 1868 and established the basis for the family's American prosperity. After working as a bookkeeper for the Rehm & Bartholomae brewery, Francis went to work for the Busch &



Above: The August Dewes House is a handsome Second Empire-style house with Baroque details.

Left: The house is located at 509 W. Wrightwood Ave. in the Lincoln Park community area on Chicago's North Side.





The northeastern portion of the Lincoln Park neighborhood developed in the 1890s as an area of large single-family mansions and handsomely-crafted row houses. Many of the houses, including the August Dewes House, were built by well-to-do German-American businessmen. Other examples of this development include (top) a grand Romanesque Revival-style house that occupied the northwest corner of Lake View Ave. and Fullerton Pkwy. (demolished) and (above) the Theurer-Wrigley House at Lake View and Arlington Pl. (a designated Chicago Landmark).

Brand brewery, where he was elected company secretary and treasurer. Leaving the company in 1881, he returned briefly to Germany but was again living in Chicago one year later. At that time, in 1882, Francis established the F.J. Dewes Brewery for which he was president and sole proprietor.

Sometime in the 1880s, Francis sold his namesake brewery and organized the Standard Brewery, once again serving as president. Younger brother August (having emigrated to Chicago in 1877) served as vice-president while another brother, Carl, was treasurer. The Standard Brewery, located at 571 S. Campbell Ave. on Chicago's West Side, was housed in an imposing group of brick buildings of varying heights (3 to 8 stories) with domed towers, cupolas, and chimneystacks that covered several blocks.

By 1895, August had succeeded his brother Francis as company president; it was at this time that he and his brother Francis built their adjacent houses on Wrightwood Ave. August served as company president into the 1920s, by which time the firm had been renamed (in the aftermath of Prohibition) the Standard Products Company, Inc. Francis died in 1921; his house subsequently became the Swedish Engineers Society of Chicago. August lived in his adjacent home until his death in 1937. Afterwards, his wife Alma remained in the house until her death in 1946, after which it passed outside the family. It has gone through several owners in the roughly 60 years since Mrs. Dewes' death and currently contains six apartments, reflecting the trend after World War II to subdivide large single-family houses into apartments in formerly exclusive neighborhoods such as Lincoln Park.

Construction and Description of the August Dewes House

On December 15, 1894, a building permit was issued to August Dewes for a two-story brick dwelling measuring 25 x 73 x 30 feet to be located at 1843 Wrightwood (the original City of Chicago street numbering for 509 W. Wrightwood). A separate permit had previously been issued on June 7, 1894, for Francis Dewes's adjacent house.

The December 22, 1894, issue of the *Economist* (a Chicago real-estate periodical) reported similar information while adding that the projected cost would be $8,000. Chicago city directories list August Dewes as residing in the new house by 1896. His previous address had been 369 South Oakley Ave., not very far from the Standard Brewery complex.

The August Dewes House, set 20 feet back from the sidewalk along Wrightwood, occupies portions of Lots 3 and 4 of H. M. Hobart's Subdivision. The house has a two-story brick garage at the rear of the lot that measures 25 x 35 feet. Two contemporary garage doors face the alley while the second floor has windowed

The August Dewes House and its larger neighbor, the Francis Dewes House, were conceived as a unified design by architects Cudell and Hercz for two German-American brothers and brewers. Top: A signed rendering of the two houses at the time of their design and construction; the larger Francis Dewes House is to the left of the August Dewes House. Above: A photograph, circa 1920s, of the Francis Dewes House; the August Dewes House is to the right. (The Francis Dewes House was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1974.)

rooms. (The garage has not been preliminarily identified as a significant historical and architectural feature.)

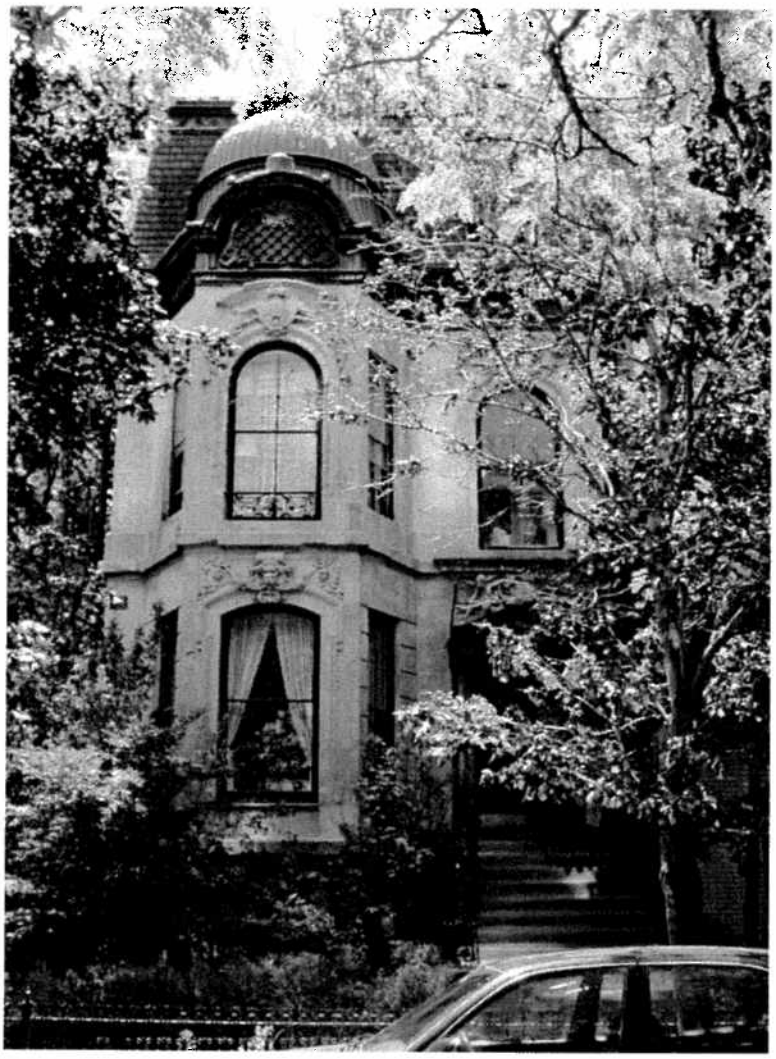
The August Dewes House is one portion of a three-part design that represents the architects Cudell and Hercz's solution for two separate family residences linked by a spacious side yard. Although the August Dewes House itself is a significant example of the Second Empire style, modified by German Baroque detailing, both it and the adjacent Francis J. Dewes House represent a handsome and significant nineteenth-century conception of separate domiciles linked by common architectural style. The Francis J. Dewes Mansion is the larger, more elaborate residence that, because of its location, has principal elevations on three sides, the west one facing the August Dewes House across the side yard. August's residence, on the western edge of the two lots, has two elaborately detailed facades facing Wrightwood Avenue and the adjacent yard of the Francis Dewes House.

Although narrower than the Francis Dewes House, the August Dewes House is very similar in overall form and detailing to the larger residence, and reflects in its design the younger brother's desire for a visually impressive home. As with the Francis Dewes House, the August Dewes House is also three stories in height and clad with stone. Unlike the larger house, it fits on a standard Chicago lot of 25 feet and has a side-hall (rather than a central-hall) plan. The stone-clad house has tall, narrow round- and square-arched windows and is capped with a mansard roof ornamented with prominently detailed dormers. There is a three-sided projecting bay on the principal (Wrightwood) elevation and a projecting pavilion facing east towards the Francis Dewes House across the side yard. A tower, circular in section, projects from the southeast corner of the residence.

Other decorative features of the August Dewes House include iron railings that flank the front entrance stairs. This ironwork uses similar motifs found ornamenting the Francis Dewes House and its side yard fence. A metal canopy with a scalloped edge sits above the August Dewes House's main entrance. Another grill-like railing extends across the bottom of the second-floor bay window. The main entrance has tall, wooden double doors with partial glazing.

The high mansard roof is clad with gray shingles and crested with a decorative metal railing. It is pierced with several windows, round ones on the north and east elevations and square ones on the east elevation. The pressed-metal eave has a low relief pattern with regularly spaced brackets.

The August Dewes House has lavishly carved stone ornament over both the main entrance and windows. The character of this ornament is Baroque, almost Rococo, in its visual exuberance and is similar to the stone decoration of the Francis Dewes House. These stone reliefs are Classical in nature and have primary visual elements, such as a cherub's face, lion's head, or a cartouche, surrounded by swirling compositions of plant forms and/or seashells. The stone reliefs are centered over the



Right: The front (Wrightwood) elevation of the August Dewes House.

Below: The house has finely-carved sculptures of Classical-style garlands and medallions framing a variety of figural images, in this instance an angel's head.

Below: The house's east elevation, facing the neighboring Francis Dewes House, is also finished in stone. Left: The house's mansard roof, a typical element of the Second Empire style, is detailed with fine metal cresting.

main entrance or windows. The designs are not repeated with the exception of the lion motif, which appears on both structures. The most elaborate ornamentation is over the main entrance, where reclining winged angels flank a cartouche. Windows in general are framed by bold surrounds.

The projecting bay on the north or principal elevation is capped by a rounded roofline. The main eave is interrupted by a semicircle with a crosshatched pattern. The roof shape is two-staged with sloping sides on the lower portion and a spherical dome on top terminating at the curb of the main roof. A slender finial with bulbous forms finishes this secondary roof. The courtyard pavilion has a similar eave shape; but the roof is a projecting version of the main mansard roof. The rear tower has a truncated conical roof that rises above the building's roofline.

The Second Empire Style and the August Dewes House

The August Dewes House was designed in a late version of the **Second Empire** architectural style, reflecting interest in both French and German Baroque and Rococo architectural precedents in its overall form and details. As with the neighboring Francis Dewes House, designed at the same time for his brother, it reflects the desire of August Dewes, like many other successful Chicago businessmen, to house his family in an elegant residence reflecting aristocratic European architectural traditions. Although the initial impression of the August Dewes House is one of lavish, florid surface, it is the vertical massing and visually bold and prominent Classical-style detailing of the house, along with its elaborate mansard roof, that identifies it as an example of the Second Empire style.

The Second Empire style is named after the reign of French emperor Napoleon III (1852-1870), commonly called the "Second Empire," and is based on a nineteenth-century reinterpretation of seventeenth-century French Baroque architecture. One of the earliest public buildings in the style was the extension to the Louvre, built in 1852-57 early in Napoleon III's reign. Begun as a medieval palace for the French monarchy, the Louvre had received additions at several times throughout its history, most notably during the Baroque period of the seventeenth century. The 1850s addition took as its point of reference this earlier Baroque addition, reinterpreting its symmetry, bold Classical ornament, and mansard roof in a visually heavier, more sculptural manner.

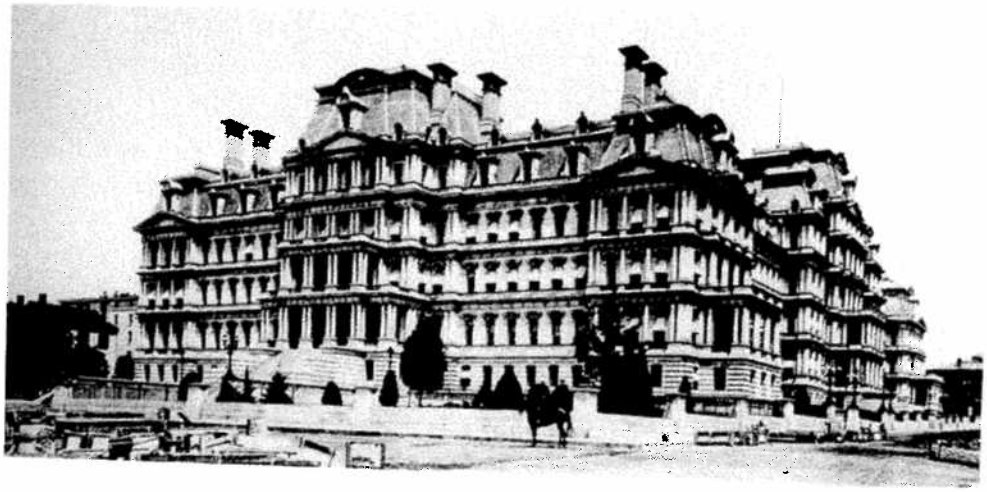
Both this building and later Parisian buildings in the same style were soon seen as the latest architectural fashion. Elsewhere in Europe, the new style appeared in competition designs for a new foreign office and war office in London in 1857. These designs were widely illustrated and also proved influential in spreading the popularity of the new style, which at the time was referred to as the 'modern' movement.

In America, the Second Empire style was seen as a prestigious and stylish European architectural style, worthy of emulation by wealthy American clients with a hunger for

The Second Empire style evolved as a mid-nineteenth-century reinterpretation of seventeenth-century French Baroque architecture. Early examples in France and the United States include (top) an addition to the Louvre, Paris (1852-57), and (middle) the State, War and Navy Building (now Executive Office Building), Washington, D.C. (1871-88).

Most surviving Second Empire-style buildings in Chicago, including the August Dewes House, are small-scale residential buildings, such as (bottom left) the row house at 1454 N. Dearborn (1879).

With its finely carved sculpture, the August Dewes House also shows the influence of the German Baroque style, as seen in (bottom right) one of the style's finest buildings, St. John Nepomuk, Munich (1733-46).



European chic. American architect James Renwick designed the first two major public examples of the style in the United States, the Corcoran Gallery (now Renwick Gallery) in Washington (1859) and the Main Hall of Vassar College, near Poughkeepsie, New York (1860). The style was widely used during the 1860s and early 1870s for many governmental buildings, including the State, War and Navy Building (now Executive Office Building) in Washington, D.C. (1871-88), the Philadelphia City Hall, and the St. Louis Post Office.

However, it is for stylish single-family houses that the Second Empire style was most used, and the style was especially popular in the 1860s and 70s. The hallmark of the Second Empire style as commonly used in the United States for both public and private buildings is the mansard roof, usually with a high profile, that rises to a flat or shallow pitched deck, and a curb around the top of the roof slope and molded cornices below. Ornamental iron cresting further draws the eye to the impressive roof. Also universal to the style are dormer windows, which may appear both in the roof and the walls. Dormer windows have various shapes including the circle. Both public buildings and larger houses, such as the August Dewes House, include projecting pavilions that are either centrally located on a façade elevation or serve as a terminating feature in the building's overall composition. The projecting volume is usually ornamented with its own elaborately detailed roof. Window openings may have round arches or flat-headed lintels with lavish hood moldings. Superimposed orders are often included. On the whole, the mass of a Second Empire-style structure appears tall, boldly modulated and sculptural in effect.

In Chicago, the Second Empire was most commonly used for houses for Chicago's well-to-do families. A prominent example was the Cyrus McCormick House on N. Rush St., designed by Cudell and Blumenthal (demolished). Surviving examples of the style include several stone-fronted row houses in the 1400-block of N. Dearborn St. built in the late 1870s, as well as the DeKoven House at Dearborn and Elm (designated as part of the Washington Square District Extension).

Both the August and Francis Dewes houses are somewhat late versions of the Second Empire style, which was most fashionable in Chicago during the 1870s and early 1880s. The large amount of figural sculpture decorating both houses is unusual for the Second Empire style, which favored boldly profiled Classical ornament such as paired columns, projecting cornices, and strongly modeled window and door surrounds. This use of figural ornament, especially the prominent caryatid figures flanking the Francis Dewes Mansion's entrance and the winged figural sculpture above the August Dewes House's entrance, may reflect the Central European origins and possible artistic tastes of both the Dewes brothers as clients and Cudell and Hercz as their architects. German and other Central European Baroque and Rococo buildings often had exuberant figural sculpture as part of their designs, and the two houses may exemplify this lingering interest in the style of grand aristocratic houses from the home countries of both the Dewes brothers and the architects.

Adolph Cudell's most significant early commission was the Cyrus McCormick House on N. Rush St. on Chicago's Near North Side. This grandly scaled Second Empire-style mansion for one of Chicago's leading industrialists was built between 1875 and 1879.

Architects Cudell and Hercz

The August Dewes House, like the neighboring Francis Dewes House, is the work of Chicago architects Cudell and Hercz. Both **Adolph Cudell (1850-1910)** and **Arthur Hercz (1866-1941)** were European-born architects and designers who moved to Chicago at two moments of great opportunity in Chicago history. Born in Aachen, Germany, Cudell arrived in Chicago shortly after the Fire of 1871 and worked for a time for architect William Le Baron Jenney before establishing his own firm, first with partner August Blumenthal in the 1870s, later with A. A. Lehmann in the 1880s, and finally Hercz in the 1890s. Cudell became known for fine residential designs such as the Cyrus McCormick house on Rush Street (1875-79, demolished), a prestigious commission for one of Chicago's most famous industrialists which made Cudell's reputation among wealthy Chicagoans. Other designs include the Perry H. Smith house at Michigan and Huron and the Aldine Square residential development, a U-shaped group of Italianate-style houses fronting a private park at Vincennes Ave. and 37th St. (both also demolished).

Hercz was born in Bacska, Hungary and was educated at the *Kunstakademie* in Vienna and in Rome. He came to Chicago in 1892 to work on the German exhibit at the World's Columbian Exposition. He remained in Chicago and briefly worked for D. H. Burnham before becoming partners with Cudell. In 1898, Hercz joined with Louis Guenzel (the future partner of Prairie School architect William Drummond). In 1903 he then moved to New York and worked for the architectural firm of William Baumgarten and Company before returning to Chicago in 1909 to form the firm of Pooley-Hercz. Around 1916 he opened Arthur Hercz Studio and subsequently specialized in interior design.

Criteria for Designation

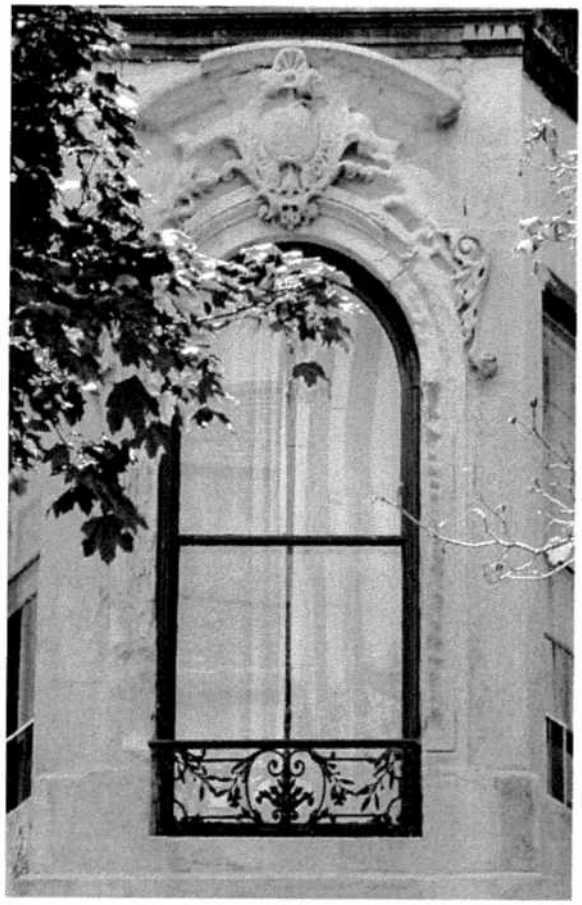
According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sect. 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, object, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the August Dewes House be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's History

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois or the United States.

- The August Dewes House, along with the adjacent and related Francis Dewes House, exemplifies the early development of the northeastern section of the Lincoln Park community as a significant neighborhood of upper-class German immigrants.



The August Dewes House is finely crafted with excellent stone carving and metalwork.

Criterion 3: Significant Person

Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois or the United States.

- August Dewes, along with his brother Francis, was a significant brewer in Chicago history as long-time president of the Standard Brewery.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The August Dewes House is an excellent example of the Second Empire style, modified with German Baroque details, in late nineteenth-century Chicago.

- Along with the Francis Dewes Mansion, the August Dewes House forms an exceptional grouping of two finely crafted and architecturally related houses commissioned by members of the Dewes family.

- With its handsomely detailed stone facades and distinctive mansard roof, the August Dewes House is distinguished by excellent overall craftsmanship and detailing in stone and metal.

Criterion 5: Important Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Adolph Cudell and Arthur Hercz, two architects significant to Chicago's late nineteenth-century history, designed the August Dewes House.

- Cudell and Hercz also designed the neighboring Francis Dewes House, meant to form an impressive streetscape with the August Dewes House.

- Cudell also designed, with previous partners, important buildings such as the Cyrus McCormick House on N. Rush St. and the Aldine Square housing development on S. Vincennes Ave. (both demolished).

Integrity Criteria

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architecture or aesthetic interest or value.

The August Dewes House possesses fine exterior physical integrity, retaining its original siting and relationship to the surrounding Lincoln Park neighborhood. The building

Above: Cudell, with his early partner August Blumenthal, designed Aldine Square, a complex of Joliet limestone-fronted row houses gathered around a small garden on the west side of S. Vincennes Ave. in Chicago's South-Side Douglas nighborhood (demolished).

Left: A detail of the Francis Dewes House, designed (along with the August Dewes House) in 1894 by Cudell in partnership with Arthur Hercz. (The photograph dates from 1973, when the house housed the Swedish Engineers Club of Chicago.)

retains its original overall form and most original details, including original front entrance staircase railings and porch hood, stone details, and mansard roof details.

Along with the adjacent Francis Dewes House (designed and built at the same time to designs by the same architects), the August Dewes House maintains the integrity of architect Cudell and Hercz's original design of two lavishly-detailed residences separated by a large side yard.

The August Dewes House has a handful of changes and alterations from its historic appearance. The building's stone walls and details have suffered some erosion; the main (Wrightwood) elevation has been coated with a protective material that is now blistering. Two metal spiral fire escapes have been added to the front and rear of the east elevation facing the Francis Dewes House. Towards the rear of the east elevation, a small side addition, raised above the basement on brick piers, extends outwards between the façade's projecting pavilion and the rear corner tower.

The interior of the August Dewes House is currently divided into six apartments. The interior has not been preliminarily identified as a significant historical and architectural feature. The coachhouse is also not preliminarilly identified as a significant feature.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever a building, structure, object, or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based upon its evaluation of the August Dewes House, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building, and
- the decorative wrought-iron gate and fence on the east side of the Building.

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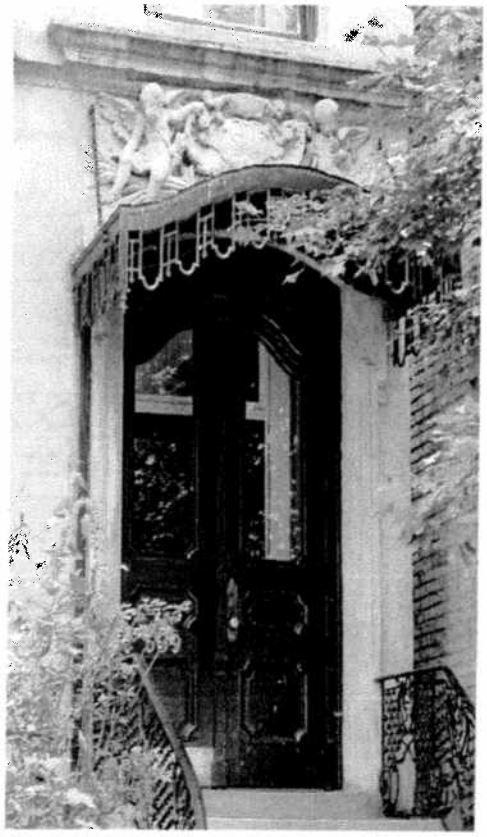

The entrance to the August Dewes House.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY OF CHICAGO
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Denise M. Casalino, P.E., Commissioner
Brian Goeken, Deputy Commissioner for Landmarks

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Illustrations
Department of Planning and Development: pp. 3, 8, 9, 15, 19.
From Apel, *Lincoln Park, Chicago*: p. 4 (top).
Allen Hess for the Commission on Chicago Landmarks: p 4 (bottom).
From Zukowsky (ed.), *Chicago Architecture, 1872-1922*: p. 6 (top).
Commission on Chicago Landmarks photograph collection: p. 6 (bottom).
From Trachtenberg and Hyman, *Architecture From Prehistory to Post-Modernism*: p. 11 (top & bottom right).
From Roth, *American Architecture*: p. 11 (middle).
Chicago Historic Resources Survey: p. 11 (bottom left).
From Lowe, *Lost Chicago*: pp. 13, 17 (top).
Barbara Crane for the Commission on Chicago Landmarks: p. 17 (bottom).

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958) TTY; (312-744-9140) fax; web site, http:www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks.

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the City Council's final landmark designation ordinance should be regarded as final.

The decorative iron gate and fence on the east side of the August Dewes House.

COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

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